



POWER 2021 Award Summaries

Throughout 2021, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has invested \$52 million specifically to diversify the economy in the Region's coal-impacted communities through the [POWER \(Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalizations\) Initiative](#). These 62 investments are projected to create or retain more than 9,648 jobs, leverage an additional \$519.5 million into the Region, and prepare thousands of workers and students for jobs in technology, manufacturing, entrepreneurship, agriculture, and other sectors creating a strong economic future for Appalachia.

ALABAMA (1 award)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *Prepping the Talent Pipeline for Economic Growth and Diversification*

Grantee: Wallace State Community College—Hanceville (WSCC)

Award Amount: \$23,191

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$23,191 to Wallace State Community College—Hanceville (WSCC) in Hanceville, Alabama, for the *Prepping the Talent Pipeline for Economic Growth and Diversification* project. Covering a 15-county region in north-central Alabama, WSCC will partner with the National Coalition of Advanced Technology Centers (NCATC) to assess the state of automotive manufacturing in Appalachian Alabama.

The resulting strategic plan will inform WSCC's educational and capital plan to meet the evolving employment needs of the industry, as demand for autonomous and electric vehicle manufacturing increases. It is also expected to guide the program development of WSCC's automotive manufacturing-related programs for the next 10 years.

KENTUCKY (11 awards)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *Harlan County Connected*

Grantee: Harlan County Fiscal Court

Award Amount: \$1,937,475

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,937,475 to Harlan County Fiscal Court in Harlan, Kentucky, for the *Harlan County Connected* project. The project will design and build 40 miles of fiber network to offer gigabit broadband to the most underserved parts of the county. Since 2012, this county has experienced an 84% decrease in mine employment, but leadership is confident in the ability of this broadband project to help it compete in the modern global economy. This last-mile fiber network is expected to leverage the ARC-funded

Kentucky Wired middle-mile fiber network to provide broadband to 282 businesses and 7,380 households.

Project Title: *Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone/Promise Zone Operations*

Grantee: Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation in London, Kentucky, for the *Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone/Promise Zone Operations* project. Kentucky Highlands and its partners will serve 11 economically distressed counties in Eastern Kentucky with access to capital, business technical assistance, remote work solutions, and career pathway incentives. The project will establish a new revolving loan fund that includes technical assistance for business and social enterprise borrowers. It will implement three new Teleworks USA (a prior POWER grant) remote work training workshops and job fairs, as well as develop a career ladder incentive program to encourage employees and social enterprise employers to participate in continuing education to accelerate career-path advancement. The project provides clear career pathways in healthcare and remote work opportunities for at-home caregivers or persons without personal transportation. Additional capital for the revolving loan fund is being provided by Woodforest Bank. The project is expected to lead to the creation of 400 jobs.

Project Title: *Economic Recovery and Resilience in Eastern Kentucky*

Grantee: Mountain Association for Community Economic Development

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Mountain Association for Community Economic Development in Berea, Kentucky, for the *Economic Recovery and Resilience in Eastern Kentucky* Initiative. The project will leverage market opportunities, expand technical assistance, and finance business start-ups, growth, and innovation. The grantee will direct these strategies toward small businesses, entrepreneurs, local governments, and community anchor institutions critical to building diverse and resilient local economies in the 54 ARC counties of Eastern Kentucky. Partners on this project include Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky, Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR), Brushy Fork Leadership Institute, What's Next, East Kentucky!?, Invest 606, and the Kentucky Office of Energy Policy. The project is expected to improve 620 businesses, serve 1,240 businesses, and create 53 new businesses. Additionally, this project will create 180 new jobs and retain 134 jobs.

Project Title: *Reliance Works (Second Chance Employment Expansion to Eastern KY)*

Grantee: Isaiah House, Inc.

Award Amount: \$1,221,825

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,221,825 to Isaiah House Treatment Center (IH) in Willisburg, Kentucky, for the *Reliance Works (Second Chance Employment Expansion to Eastern KY)* Initiative. The project will expand its second-chance employment program "Reliance Works" to six economically distressed counties in Appalachian Kentucky (Estill, Jackson, Lee, Lincoln, Powell, and Wolfe). The Reliance Works Employment and Recovery Project is a multi-pronged approach to positively impacting the lives of families and working-age adults. The project will create jobs and increase labor participation rates by establishing new business ventures using the proven workforce model for second-chance employment that IH has successfully implemented in other areas of Kentucky since 2015. Additionally, the project will provide participants with recovery supports, including transitional housing, peer support, transportation, telehealth counseling, and accountability through drug testing. Through a partnership with Eastern Kentucky Concentrated

Employment Program (EKCEP), Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR), Estill Development Alliance, Bluegrass Workforce Investment Board (BGWIB), Operation UNITE, Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce, and Pine Ridge Regional Industrial Authority, the project is expected to create 50 to 60 jobs and provide on-the-job training for 70 to 80 people in recovery from substance use disorder who have limited work experience, criminal backgrounds, or poor work histories.

Project Title: *East Kentucky AWS Training and Testing Center*

Grantee: Big Sandy Community and Technical College/KCTCS

Award Amount: \$1,161,684

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,161,684 to Big Sandy Community and Technical College/KCTCS in Prestonsburg, Kentucky, for the *East Kentucky AWS Training and Testing Center*. This project will increase capacity to provide welding/fabrication training that will codify a pipeline of entry-level and highly skilled welders to support welding and related industries in Floyd, Johnson, Magoffin, Martin, and Pike counties. Activities will include renovation to an existing welding technology laboratory space on the Mayo Campus in Paintsville, KY. Renovation/retrofit activities will enable the site to add 18–22 welding training stations, welding stands, and curtains to support welding instruction delivery aligned to the American Welding Society’s curriculum and professional certifications. Partners will include Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP) and Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR). The project is expected to train 70 new welders, improve skills of 30 dislocated or incumbent workers, and improve 10 businesses with qualified workers.

Project Title: *Appalachia Access to Capital Initiative*

Grantee: Community Ventures Corporation

Award Amount: \$630,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$630,000 to Community Ventures Corporation in Lexington, Kentucky, for the *Appalachia Access to Capital Initiative*. By providing technical assistance and training, the project will help non- and for-profit businesses in small, rural, coal-impacted communities attract new levels of investment and spur economic growth. The initiative spans 60 counties in eastern Kentucky and West Virginia. Community Ventures’ efforts will focus on providing one-on-one guidance to organizations applying for New Markets Tax Credit and USDA Community Facilities financing. Activities will include creation of networking opportunities, pitch deck preparation, and implementation of community benefits agreements tailored to the specific needs of each community and organization. Partners ~~Fahe~~, Appalachian Community Capital, and the Mountain Association will provide additional training on access to capital and financing best practices. The project is expected to serve 27 businesses, create over 200 jobs, and leverage \$15 million in private investment over three years.

Project Title: *Pikeville Medical Center’s Medical Training Facility and Career Development Center*

Grantee: Pikeville Medical Center, Inc.

Award Amount: \$508,076

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$508,076 to Pikeville Medical Center, Inc. (PMC) in Pikeville, Kentucky, for the *Pikeville Medical Center’s Medical Training Facility and Career Development Center*. The project will help equip a medical training facility and career center to serve existing staff, healthcare students, and community members in seven economically distressed counties. Facility participants will receive collaborative learning opportunities and career guidance while strengthening the area’s healthcare workforce and addressing a

shortage of rural clinical healthcare providers. The project will take advantage of a prior POWER grant for PMC's Children's Hospital. PMC will partner with Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR), Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP), Big Sandy Community and Technical College, UK Healthcare, and local school systems to implement effective programs based on local need and connect community members of all ages to opportunities. The project is expected to create 15 new jobs at the facility, improve the skills of 1,712 workers/trainees, and serve 11,351 patients in its first year.

Project Title: *Last-Mile Broadband: A Collaborative Approach*

Grantee: Shaping Our Appalachian Region, Inc. (SOAR)

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: An ARC grant of \$50,000 to Shaping Our Appalachian Region, Inc. (SOAR) in Pikeville, Kentucky, for the *Last-Mile Broadband: A Collaborative Approach* project. The project will serve a 14-county area in eastern Kentucky and build the capacity of Appalachian Kentucky's Rural Energy Cooperative Corporations (RECCs) to utilize their current infrastructure to bring high-speed internet to the region's unserved and underserved communities. SOAR will partner with two members of the East Kentucky Power Cooperative: Cumberland Valley Electric and Jackson Energy Cooperative. The project's efforts will complement increased funding from the state of Kentucky dedicated to broadband deployment and last-mile projects.

Project Title: *Pikeville/Breaks Tourism Partnership*

Grantee: City of Pikeville

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to the City of Pikeville, in Pikeville, Kentucky, for the *Pikeville/Breaks Tourism Partnership*. In partnership with the Breaks Interstate Park (Buchanan County, VA), Pikeville will conduct a feasibility study for tourism in the region. The study will determine if developing health and wellness/eco/adventure/cultural tourism opportunities and related businesses is feasible. The ultimate goal of the project is to position the Breaks to become a national attraction with the city of Pikeville supporting the influx of tourism with lodging, restaurants, retail, and tourism-related businesses. The resulting study will include a report on the project area's physical assets, an economic and tourism market study, and a tourism branding strategy.

Project Title: *Robertson County Broadband Feasibility Study*

Grantee: Robertson County Fiscal Court

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Robertson County Fiscal Court in Mt. Olivet, Kentucky, for the *Robertson County Broadband Feasibility Study*. In partnership with the Buffalo Trace Area Development District; the county's health, education, and public safety agencies; and the City of Mt. Olivet, the Robertson County Fiscal Court will conduct a broadband feasibility study. It will identify county-wide gaps in broadband service, assess the area's broadband needs to facilitate future economic development, determine the technologies best suited for filling in coverage gaps, and offer deployment strategies that meet the county's broadband needs. The county will use this study/plan to implement the appropriate broadband infrastructure in phased construction to spur economic development; and the plan will encompass, as well as build upon, the KY Wired initiative and the county's "last mile" efforts.

Project Title: *Technical Evaluation of Novel Value-Added Biomass Products*

Grantee: Martin County Economic Development Authority

Award Amount: \$48,030

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$48,030 to Martin County Economic Development Authority in Inez, Kentucky, for the *Technical Evaluation of Novel Value-Added Biomass Products* project. The project will evaluate the economic opportunity of converting biomass waste materials from conservation practices into value-added wood-based products. The study will characterize the biomass waste streams produced in Martin and Pike counties in Kentucky and Mingo County in West Virginia. Characterization includes identifying the type, size, volume, and water content of the biomass. The study will then evaluate market characteristics for select biomass products, including mulch, biochar, bundled firewood, and structural timber. Further, the study will evaluate market size, growth opportunities, competitors, regulations, and distribution and marketing requirements. Lastly, local versus central production approaches will be evaluated for equipment requirements, capital costs, and associated labor and cost requirements.

MARYLAND (1 award)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *Advanced Technology Center Development—Phase II*

Grantee: Frostburg State University

Award Amount: \$1,480,979

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,480,979 to the Frostburg State University in Frostburg, Maryland, for *Advanced Technology Center Development—Phase II*. This project will implement Phase II of the Western Maryland Advanced Technology Center (ATC) Development Project at Frostburg State University (FSU) Innovation Park. With a partnership between FSU and the private and public sectors, the facility will create new job opportunities and promote economic development by supporting the growth of industries that are important to the future of the region's economy, including information technology, renewable and resilient energy, green construction materials manufacturing, environmental hazard removal, and biotech laboratory testing and analysis. The facility, located in an Opportunity Zone, will benefit residents of Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties by training and educating the workforce in new technologies. This project is expected to create 18 new businesses and 125 jobs, retain 230 jobs, assist 40 existing businesses with access to highly skilled workers, and leverage \$2.5 million in private infrastructure investment.

obtain employment.

NEW YORK (3 awards)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *Broome County Innovation District Fiber Enhancement and Smart Cities Plan*

Grantee: Broome County

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Broome County in Binghamton, New York, for the *Broome County Innovation District Fiber Enhancement and Smart Cities Plan* to conduct a broadband feasibility study and develop a Smart Cities plan focused on the “innovation districts” of the downtown areas of Binghamton, Johnson City, and Endicott. The planning project will include an assessment of opportunities for expansion of the open-access fiber network within and adjacent to these areas and opportunities to integrate Smart Cities technologies into community services. Led by the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development as well as municipal stakeholders from the Town of Union, villages of Endicott and Johnson City, and the City of Binghamton, the project will have input and matching funds provided by Broome County Industrial Development Agency, a nonprofit economic development organization, and will receive feedback on asset availability and expansion feasibility from Southern Tier Network, a regional nonprofit open-access telecommunications company.

Project Title: *Town of Dryden Southern Tier Network Expansion*

Grantee: Town of Dryden

Award Amount: \$624,614

Announcement Date: December 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$624,614 to the town of Dryden, New York for the *Town of Dryden Southern Tier Network Expansion* project. The project will connect the Southern Tier Network (STN) at Cornell University to the Dryden Municipal Building and SUNY Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3). The installation of 13.5 miles of fiber optic cabling will provide direct access to STN resources including regional educational, public safety and broadband networks. This project will improve connectivity to 7 communities in the counties of Cortland and Thompson. Upon completion of the project, Dryden and TC3 will have a completely functional, commissioned network connecting to STN's 600+ miles dark fiber network with access to 50 public school buildings, 4 vocational school campuses, 28 public libraries and multiple state and private universities including Cornell University and Binghamton University. Outcomes are expected to include 13.5 miles of fiber and serve up to 382 businesses and 6,309 households.

Project Title: *Regional Rural Wireless Solution*

Grantee: Town of Caton

Award Amount: \$470,000

Announcement Date: December 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$470,000 to the town of Caton, New York for the *Regional Rural Wireless Solution* project. The project will expand broadband availability in the communities of Caton and Lindley in Steuben County by creating four new wireless broadband telecommunications towers. The project will utilize two existing towers and construct an additional two towers to maximize service area and speeds. Upon completion of the buildout, project partner Southern Tier Network, a nonprofit, will own and maintain the equipment. An RFP will be issued to internet service providers for the buildout of the wireless network. The project will expand service to two communities, serve up to 263 households, and 26 businesses.

NORTH CAROLINA (5 awards)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *Unlocking New Energy Investments for Job Creation and Business Growth*

Grantee: Appalachian Voices

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Appalachian Voices in Boone, North Carolina, for the *Unlocking New Energy Investments for Job Creation and Business Growth* project. Appalachian Voices and its partners will bolster the solar industry in a region heavily impacted by the decline in the coal economy by creating and implementing the Appalachian Solar Finance Fund (the Fund). The Fund will provide financing and technical assistance to launch 64 solar installations at commercial and institutional sites, strengthening the emerging solar industry and boosting solar energy capacity. The project will serve coal-impacted communities in Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. The Fund is an outgrowth of a previous POWER planning grant. Additional funding for the project is provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, the Appalachian Investment Ecosystem Initiative, Invest Appalachia, New Resource Solutions, and the Natural Capital Investment Fund. The project is expected to create 282 jobs while producing \$5.4 million in energy savings and attracting \$7.9 million in private investment.

Project Title: *WNC Center of Excellence in Precision Manufacturing: Preparing Mountain Area Workers with Skills and Qualifications for Living Wage Employment*

Grantee: Asheville–Buncombe Technical Community College

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Asheville–Buncombe Technical Community College in Asheville, North Carolina, for the *WNC Center of Excellence in Precision Manufacturing: Preparing Mountain Area Workers with Skills and Qualifications for Living Wage Employment* project. The project will equip a state-of-the-art training facility to deliver comprehensive training programs in precision manufacturing to unemployed and under-employed residents in Appalachian Western North Carolina. The program will also offer wrap-around services to workers, including those impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and opioid crises. The North Carolina Community College System is providing \$1,835,000 in matching funds for the project. The project is expected to provide training for 800 jobs that will be immediately available to the local facility of a global defense contractor in the aviation and aerospace sector.

Project Title: *Accelerating Outdoors: Outdoor Recreation Powering Economic Growth and Recovery*

Grantee: Mountain Bizworks

Award Amount: \$1,350,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,350,000 to Mountain BizWorks in Asheville, North Carolina, for the *Accelerating Outdoors: Outdoor Recreation Powering Economic Growth and Recovery* project. Building on the existing outdoor recreation industry cluster, which was bolstered by a prior POWER grant, the project intends to make Western North Carolina the leading outdoor economy in the eastern United States. The project features an integrated program that offers capital access and technical assistance for local businesses; trains workers to meet the employment needs of the industry; strengthens the regional outdoor recreation brand, enhancing market access for the cluster; and builds the capacity of communities to develop, attract, and support outdoor recreation businesses. The area targeted by the project has been adversely affected by the closure of coal-fired power plants and job losses in the coal supply chain. Financial support for the project is being provided by Dogwood Health Trust, Western Carolina University, Appalachian State University, Outdoor Gear Builders of WNC, and Mountain BizWorks. The project is expected to create 25 businesses, yield 180 new jobs, and leverage \$8.1 million in private investment.

Project Title: *WNC Early Childhood Educator Workforce Project*

Grantee: Land of Sky Regional Council

Award Amount: \$801,923

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$801,923 to Land of Sky Regional Council in Asheville, North Carolina, for the *WNC Early Childhood Educator Workforce Project*. The project will reduce the severe shortage of childcare teachers in 11 targeted counties in Southwestern North Carolina through training, coaching, education, and placement of new persons in the field. The project includes communities affected by coal-related supply chain industries. Building the childcare industry will reinvigorate the economy of these communities by creating more jobs in childcare to support working families and thereby attracting investment. The current inadequacy in childcare spaces is a challenge to the economic recovery of the western North Carolina region. With the additional teachers will come additional childcare spaces to support working families. The partners on this project include the Southwestern Commission, Southwestern Child Development Commission, Buncombe Partnership for Children, NCWorks, and Children and Family Resource Center. The project will build the capacity to provide quality care for young children and provide the resources needed for early childhood development, for parents to return to work, and for communities to seek economic investment. Over the course of two years, this project is expected to create 160 jobs.

Project Title: *Transitioning and Upscaling Creative Sector Business in WNC*

Grantee: Land of Sky Regional Council

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Land of Sky Regional Council, in Asheville, North Carolina, for the *Transitioning and Upscaling Creative Sector Business in WNC* project. In partnership with Western Arts Agencies of North Carolina, Southwestern Commission, High Country Council of Governments, and other local development organizations, the project will develop a regional "Scaling Creative Sector Business Plan." This initiative aims to unlock the potential of the arts economy in a 13-county area in Western North Carolina by increasing the average wage for creative entrepreneurs, reducing unemployment, and further establishing the region's reputation as a creative entrepreneurial hub. This project will create a strategic plan that increases coordination between economic development specialists and arts sector organizations; develop best practices to transform microentrepreneurs into employers; and identify the steps necessary to implement and scale the project.

OHIO (10 awards)

2021 Awards

Project Title: Noble County Grid Modernization and Make Ready for Broadband Deployment

Grantee: Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc. in Marietta, Ohio, for the *Noble County Grid Modernization and Make-Ready for Broadband Deployment* project. The project will upgrade 215 miles of main-line electrical routes to increase grid resiliency and enable Internet Service Providers to cost effectively deploy fiber broadband along these routes. Approximately 90 percent of the project will occur in southern Noble County, one of the most unserved areas in the state for broadband

availability. The affected electrical distribution routes will also extend into adjacent areas of Morgan, Monroe, and Washington counties, reaching additional unserved or underserved areas. The upgraded routes will reach 1,392 of the cooperative's customers, including 208 businesses. An earlier POWER grant funded the broadband feasibility study upon which the current grant is based.

Project Title: *Gateway Communities and Sustainable Recreation: An Asset-Based Approach to Building Resilient Communities and Transitioning Appalachian Economies*

Grantee: Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia

Award Amount: \$1,493,716

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,493,716 to Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia (ORCA) in Athens, Ohio, for *Gateway Communities and Sustainable Recreation: An Asset-Based Approach to Building Resilient Communities and Transitioning Appalachian Economies*. The project will help diversify the region's coal-based economy and strengthen economic opportunities for low-income communities, aspiring entrepreneurs, and established small businesses by concentrating investments in natural and cultural assets. Focusing on seven counties (Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Morgan, Perry, Vinton, and Washington), the partners on this project include Wayne National Forest, Buckeye Trail Association, Hocking Athens, Perry Community Action, Rural Action, Appalachian Center for Economic Networks, Ohio's Hill Country Heritage Area (Ohio's Winding Road), Athens County Economic Development Council, Athens County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and others. The project is expected to leverage \$8.5 million in private and public investment in trail and gateway community infrastructure; engage over 20 elected officials in seven counties to endorse a shared vision of development for the outdoor recreation sector; and support the retention of 89 current jobs, the start-up of 24 new businesses, and the creation of 36 new jobs with entrepreneurship training and technical assistance.

Project Title: *Ohio River Valley Workforce Development Initiative*

Grantee: Switzerland of Ohio Local School District

Award Amount: \$1,314,880

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,314,880 to the Switzerland of Ohio Local School District in Woodsfield, Ohio, for the *Ohio River Valley Workforce Development Initiative*. This project is a collaboration between education and career service providers and local industry to serve unemployed, underemployed, and displaced workers and veterans transitioning to new job skills in 11 distressed or at-risk counties covering Southeastern Ohio and West Virginia Opportunity Zones. The Initiative will enhance in-person and remote education and workforce training programs centered at the Swiss Hills Career Center in Monroe County, Ohio, enabling workers to obtain the skills and industry credentials necessary to access jobs in regional industry growth sectors, including healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and the transportation/automotive sectors. The program will also serve high school students with classroom and online workforce training and internship opportunities, creating a youth workforce talent pipeline to benefit local businesses. The project is expected to create 10 new businesses and 600 new jobs; retain 200 jobs; provide technical assistance to 15 existing businesses; and provide training to 100 adult workers/trainees and 225 high school students.

Project Title: *Fresh Start Workforce Development Program*

Grantee: Urban Mission Ministries, Inc.

Award Amount: \$980,374

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$980,374 to Urban Mission Ministries, Inc., in Steubenville, Ohio, for the *Fresh Start Workforce Development Program*. The project will expand Urban

Mission Ministries' workforce development program, Fresh Start, for individuals in recovery, targeting six counties in Ohio and two counties in West Virginia. Central to the project will be the renovation of a former grocery store. Renovations will include the creation of two classrooms, industrial-sized training kitchen, on-site restaurant, small grocery co-op, and space for business incubation. Upon completion of the renovations, all programming will operate at the location, providing a more user-friendly location for participants. Fresh Start will use a three-tier approach that includes life skills and empowerment classes, educational opportunities, and on-site vocational training programs. Partners include Eastern Gateway Community College, West Virginia Northern Community College, Parkhurst Dining, and Walmart Distribution Center. The project is expected to renovate a 28,500-square-foot former grocery store, create 3 businesses and 10 jobs, retain 23 jobs, and assist 20 businesses and 350 trainees.

Project Title: *Belmont College Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Training*

Grantee: Belmont College

Award Amount: \$445,158

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$445,158 to Belmont College in St. Clairsville, Ohio, for the *Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Training* program. The project will expand Belmont College's HVAC Training program in order to meet the needs for local HVAC technicians. Belmont College will partner with Belmont County Drug Court and Youth Services Systems, Inc., in Wheeling, WV, to train participants and at-risk high school students. Additionally, 20 students in the Mental Health Studies Program at Belmont College will receive real-world experience by providing work support for drug court participants on a weekly basis. This program will also allow Belmont College to offer traditional HVAC offerings by having equipment and trained instructors to provide additional classes in air quality and building management. The expansion of this HVAC program is expected to train 50 students annually.

Project Title: *Green Acres: A Regional Workforce Education/Training Ecosystem*

Grantee: Noble Local School District

Award Amount: \$404,856

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$404,856 to Noble Local School District in Sarahsville, Ohio, for *Green Acres: A Regional Workforce Education/Training Ecosystem*. The project will include the purchase of specialized equipment and resources for on-site and in-demand education/training programming. This phase of a multi-phase project will provide vital funding for essential agribusiness training-related equipment and upskilling programming that targets six counties (Belmont, Guernsey, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, and Noble) to create a regional ecosystem to support agribusiness. Without efforts to retain existing workers or attract younger emerging talent into the pipeline, many jobs in Ohio agribusiness could go unfilled. This project will create an ecosystem in which K-12 students are accessing and receiving robust and industry-driven hands-on education/training, while creating in-demand workforce re-entry training and upskilling for existing adult workforce participants. The leveraged partnership with Zane State College, Ohio State University, and local/regional employers will provide a comprehensive approach to fill these jobs. This project is expected to serve 1,800 students and 150 adult participants.

Project Title: *Adapting to Change: Powering Up Tomorrow's Workforce*

Grantee: University of Cincinnati

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to University of Cincinnati Clermont College, in partnership with Adams, Brown, and Clermont counties in Batavia, Ohio, for the *Adapting to Change: Powering Up Tomorrow's Workforce* project. The project team will gather information, evaluate the findings, and develop plans for a future regional training and employment proposal in the high-demand field of supply chain and logistics. The project will identify and explore regional data and work towards engaging regional stakeholders in conversations and planning activities throughout the 12-month project period. These activities include community conversations, employer surveys, local and regional data, labor demand analysis, local and regional business development plan exploration, and educational program needs analysis for program development. UC Clermont College will consider certifications, industry credentials, career ladders, scaffolding programs, and entrepreneurial support that will build on the commercial driver's license training and online supply chain associate degree, which their regional education partners currently offer.

Project Title: *Morgan County Broadband Technical Assistance*

Grantee: Morgan County Commissioners

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Morgan County in McConnelsville, Ohio, for *Broadband Technical Assistance*. Led by the Morgan County Commissioners in partnership with local and regional public agencies and private businesses, project funds will go toward broadband asset mapping in rural Morgan County in southeastern Ohio to identify unserved and underserved areas. The final comprehensive report will also include an analysis of broadband demand in the county, recommendations for potential broadband projects, and strategies for converting broadband demand into economic growth.

Project Title: *Reimagining Struthers*

Grantee: The City of Struthers, Ohio

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to the City of Struthers, Ohio, for *Reimagining Struthers* to create a regional strategic plan for green industrial manufacturing in Trumbull, Mahoning, and Columbiana counties in Eastern Ohio (EOH); Hancock County in Northern West Virginia (NWV); and Beaver, Lawrence, and Mercer counties in Western Pennsylvania (WPA). The strategic plan will guide the development of CASTLO Community Improvement Corporation Industrial Park, next to downtown Struthers, as a green industrial manufacturing hub for research and development (R&D). Additionally, the plan will assess the feasibility of reviving dormant industrial infrastructure to support a regional green manufacturing ecosystem that will increase jobs, business, and product development in the EOH-NWV-WPA region.

Project Title: *Voltage Valley Entrepreneurial Ecosystem—Regionalization Study*

Grantee: Eastgate Regional Council of Governments

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Eastgate Regional Council of Governments in Youngstown, Ohio, for the *Voltage Valley Entrepreneurial Ecosystem—Regionalization Study*. With increased investments in the Mahoning Valley of Ohio in the electric vehicle (EV) sector, this grant will support an assessment of the existing utilities in the project region (with a focus on water, wastewater, and electric power), as well as a regional implementation strategy that will identify best practices for utility regionalization. The development of a regional utilities management system will streamline development and permitting across

the various jurisdictions of eastern Ohio, increasing the potential of large-scale job creation at development sites.

PENNSYLVANIA (9 awards)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *Greene County Broadband Implementation Initiative*

Grantee: Greene County Board of Commissioners

Award Amount: \$2,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$2,500,000 to the *Greene County Board of Commissioners* in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, for the *Greene County Broadband Implementation Initiative*.

The project will leverage a public-private partnership with Windstream to deploy 105 miles of fiber network to 108 businesses and 767 households. This project was based on a 2019 POWER-funded broadband feasibility study, which recommended that the county publish an RFP and competitively select an internet service provider as its partner in closing the digital divide.

Project Title: *Igniting Innovation in the PA Wilds Region*

Grantee: Ben Franklin Technology Center of Central and Northern PA, Inc.

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Ben Franklin Technology Center in State College, Pennsylvania, for the *Igniting Innovation in the PA Wilds Region* project. The project will support and enhance opportunities for the technology-based entrepreneurs and manufacturers in the Pennsylvania Wilds Region. In partnership with the PA Technical Assistance Program, PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, and the small business development centers of Clarion University, Gannon University, and Penn State University, a foundation will be built for a sustainable rural innovation economy for the 13 counties in this coal-impacted area. The PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship has developed a growing entrepreneurial ecosystem in many sectors, creating a competitive region among existing manufacturers. Programs will be delivered to attract remote workers to the area. Project activities will include entrepreneurial competitions, assessments of existing manufacturers, microfinancing for new product development, and planning for high-return placemaking investments. This is a first-of-its-kind collaboration in Appalachian Pennsylvania that can serve as a model for kindling rural innovation economies across the region. The project is expected to serve 50 businesses, 13 communities, and 135 participants; create 15 businesses and 30 jobs; and leverage \$500,000 in private investment.

Project Title: *Institute for Health and Cyber Knowledge (IHACK)*

Grantee: Gannon University

Award Amount: \$1,499,895

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,499,895 to Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania, for the *Institute for Health and Cyber Knowledge (IHACK)* project. Gannon University will create Hatchery 4.0 within the Institute of Health and Cyber Knowledge (IHACK), which will provide hands-on experience for students to work directly with businesses to help solve real-world problems. The University will develop a pipeline of workers to fill high-paying, high-demand 21st century jobs and assist existing traditional manufacturers to pivot their operations to be smart factories in response to Industry 4.0, a phase of manufacturing and supply chain

management that focuses on interconnectivity, automation, machine learning, and real-time data exchange. Project activities will include creation of a STEM pathway for middle and high school students and the establishment of three centers of expertise for manufacturers, and will provide nationally recognized college degree programs in high-demand engineering and cyber fields. Engaged in the project are multiple partners providing private funds and support for this project, which will impact eight counties in Pennsylvania. This project is expected to retain 146 jobs, assist 115 businesses, provide training to 169 workers and trainees, and serve 339 students.

Project Title: *Clarion County Connected*

Grantee: Clarion County, Pennsylvania

Award Amount: \$1,096,125

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,096,125 to Clarion County, Pennsylvania, for the *Clarion County Connected* project. The project will design, build, and launch fixed wireless broadband service to 85 businesses and 1620 households. Grantee will competitively select an internet service provider partner to manage customer support and ongoing network maintenance. The scope of the project includes the construction of four new towers and the use of five existing county 911 towers to deploy a total of nine wireless broadband sites.

Project Title: *Connecting the Alleghenies Through Core Broadband Infrastructure*

Grantee: Bedford County, Pennsylvania

Award Amount: \$745,588

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$745,588 to Bedford County, Pennsylvania, for the *Connecting the Alleghenies Through Core Broadband Infrastructure* project. The project will design and build four towers in Bedford County that will allow a contracted internet service provider to offer fixed wireless broadband service to Bedford and Fulton counties in Pennsylvania and Allegany County in Maryland. This multi-state network is expected to provide broadband speeds of up to 100 Mbps download and 50 Mbps upload to five businesses and 350 households that are currently underserved.

Project Title: *Workforce Ready through Recovery and Career Services*

Grantee: Outreach Center for Community Resources

Award Amount: \$705,477

Announcement Date: September, 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$705,477 to Outreach Center for Community Resources in Scranton, Pennsylvania, for the *Workforce Ready through Recovery and Career Services* project. The project is a community partnership among nonprofit agencies, educational institutions, local businesses, SUD recovery providers and government agencies to develop a ready workforce and expand the SUD recovery ecosystem in Northeastern Pennsylvania (Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming counties). A variety of education, workforce, and life skills trainings and wraparound services will be provided for the unemployed, underemployed, justice-involved individuals, and individuals in recovery seeking reentry into the workforce. In addition to workforce and life skills training, services will include recovery support, financial literacy, GED classes, job placement and individualized case management. Project partners will include local businesses to address gaps in the labor force and establish an employment pipeline for workers with high-demand skills, and behavioral health providers for recovery services that will support participants' efforts to successfully reenter the workforce and achieve long-term recovery. The project is expected to serve 180 patients, train 1,200 workers/trainees, assist 150 businesses, and create 800 jobs.

Project Title: *Carbon County Rural Broadband Coverage & Feasibility Study*

Grantee: Carbon County Commissioners

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Carbon County Commissioners in Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania, in partnership with Ben Franklin Technology Partners and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA), for the *Carbon County Rural Broadband Coverage & Feasibility Study*. The study will identify county-wide gaps in broadband service, determine the best technologies and approaches to filling these gaps, develop broadband deployment strategies to address coverage gaps, and provide cost estimates for deployment strategies.

Project Title: *NE PA Trail Connectivity Assessment*

Grantee: Pennsylvania Environmental Council

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the *NE PA Trail Connectivity Assessment*, a feasibility assessment of the uncompleted section of the Northeast PA Trails Forum's long-distance trails. The project is defined by eight counties, and the focus of the planning work will be to determine the needs of the sections of the trail corridor where there has not been organizational capacity to undertake a detailed study. Work will include initial assessment of right-of-way acquisitions, community outreach to determine visitor readiness, identification of potential funding mechanisms, and segment prioritization. The study's goals are to collate the information needed to advance the individual projects of the NEPA Trails Forum and map out a path for trail connectivity, thereby creating trail distances that invite visitors to spend multiple days exploring the region and demonstrating the value of a cohesive trail identity.

Project Title: *Regional Integrated Manufacturing Ecosystem*

Grantee: IN-2-Market, Inc.

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to IN-2-Market, Inc. (In-2-M) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the *Regional Integrated Manufacturing Ecosystem* project. The work will leverage the Manufacturing Extension Partnerships in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia to plan, create, and test an approach for an innovative manufacturing ecosystem. The project will result in a report for regional manufacturing development as an economic development strategy to re-shore supply chains and build manufacturing jobs close to coal-impacted communities. The grant will also support the recruitment of committed partners and completion of focused experimental pilots to prepare for full implementation.

TENNESSEE (1 award)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *ReFrame Construction Workforce Development Cohort*

Grantee: ReFrame Foundation

Award Amount: \$32,673

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$32,673 to ReFrame Foundation in Jonesborough, Tennessee, for the *ReFrame Construction Workforce Development Cohort* project. ReFrame will conduct feasibility studies and help organizations develop project plans and implementation proposals to promote safe, healthy, and affordable homes that support the work of home repair and rehabilitation partners across Appalachia. In addition, the project will promote economic development and job creation in Tennessee and North Carolina by exploring current and future adult workforce readiness in residential construction. The project will also enable up to 10 nonprofits to participate in the *ReFrame Construction Workforce Development Cohort* and increase their capacity to lead and launch workforce programs in residential home construction. This project is expected to conduct five feasibility studies, serve 10 community partnerships, and improve three community partnerships through training and development of workforce programs.

VIRGINIA (5 awards)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *Central Appalachian CDC: Bringing Community Development Investment to Coal-Impacted Communities*

Grantee: Appalachian Community Capital

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Appalachian Community Capital in Christiansburg, Virginia, for *Central Appalachian CDC: Bringing Community Development Investment to Coal-Impacted Communities*. Appalachian Community Capital and its partners will create quality community development and entrepreneurial opportunities by preparing communities and businesses to access new sources of capital. Serving five Central Appalachian states (North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia), the project will provide 40 coal-impacted communities with technical assistance to structure development financial transactions, guidance in creating prospectuses and pitch decks targeting investors, and outreach and deal placement to pre-vetted investors. This assistance will include a high-level investor convening in Appalachia. The result will be a portfolio of investments that provide investors both sufficient financial returns and robust social returns. Financial support for the project is being provided by the CDFI Fund at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Dogwood Health Trust, Goldman Sachs, and OhioSE Economic Development. The project is expected to create 15 businesses and 3,000 jobs while leveraging \$400 million in private investment.

Project Title: *Buchanan/Tazewell Wireless Communication Job Growth Corridor*

Grantee: Virginia Coalfield Coalition

Award Amount: \$1,000,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,000,000 to the Virginia Coalfield Coalition in Lebanon, Virginia, for the *Buchanan/Tazewell Wireless Communication Job Growth Corridor*. This project will build six new fiber-lit cell towers along a 20-mile stretch of U.S. Route 460. This highway is currently 95% unserved with cell service, making it difficult for local companies to bring clients into their offices or send field technicians out to work sites. A public-private partnership with a national wireless service provider allows the grantee to ensure that the coverage provided by the new cell towers will fill in current service gaps. The project is

expected to serve 25 existing businesses and facilitate business retention and recruitment at industrial parks in the region.

Project Title: *Project Trace*

Grantee: LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

Award Amount: \$49,875

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$49,875 to LENOWISCO Planning District in Duffield, Virginia, in partnership with Invest SWVA, for *Project Trace* to determine the feasibility of adapting or creating an ag-tech tool to track and report food miles of specialty grains grown in Southwest Virginia, specifically in Lee, Scott, and Wise counties. If feasible, the project team will provide additional information regarding the steps necessary to implement the adaptation or development of such a tool. This tool will help to present the value-add of Southwest Virginian grains to the industry, increase grain market opportunities for Southwest Virginian farmers, and drive additional revenue. It is anticipated that one report will be produced as a result of this project.

Project Title: *Building an Outdoor Recreation Economy in Southwest Virginia*

Grantee: County of Russell, Virginia

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: December 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to County of Russell County, Virginia for the *Building an Outdoor Recreation Economy in Southwest Virginia* project. Through this project, Russell County and their partners will construct a visitor center near St. Paul, Virginia, which will serve the seven coalfield counties of Southwest Virginia. Named for the nearby confluence of the Clinch, Powell, and Big Sandy watersheds, the Three Rivers Destination Center will be a multipurpose facility designed to propel Southwest Virginia's tourism and outdoor recreation economy. The center will serve as the headquarters for Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority, a visitor center for regional amenities, and an ecology discovery center for the Clinch River State Park.

Project Title: *Appalachian Hardwood Training Initiative (AHTI)*

Grantee: Dabney S. Lancaster Community College

Award Amount: \$1,466,029

Announcement Date: December 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,466,029 to Dabney S. Lancaster Community College in Clifton Forge, Virginia, for the *Appalachian Hardwood Training Initiative (AHTI)* program. The AHTI will develop educational and training opportunities for those employed in the industry's regional sawmills and wood manufacturing facilities as well as for unemployed and underemployed individuals in Appalachia. This project is expected to recruit, serve, and train up to 950 individuals in Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky over three years.

WEST VIRGINIA (15 awards)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *Pocahontas County Quiet Zone Fiber Deployment*

Grantee: Pocahontas County Commission

Award Amount: \$2,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$2,500,000 to the Pocahontas County Commission in Marlinton, West Virginia, for the 2021 *Pocahontas County Quiet Zone Fiber Deployment* project. The project will construct an aerial fiber network to provide broadband to businesses and households in Pocahontas County, the majority of whom reside in the federally mandated National Radio Quiet Zone within a 10-mile radius of the Green Bank Observatory. Pocahontas County must use fiber for this project rather than less expensive solutions like fixed wireless because the Federal Communications Commission prohibits the use of any electrical equipment that could cause radio interference in the Zone. The broadband provided by this project will help expand telemedicine services, establish opportunities for remote work, and support business development in the region. The proposed network is expected to reach approximately 24 businesses and 1,011 homes and has a projected completion date of December 2023.

Project Title: *Woodlands Route 33 Middle/Last Mile Fiber Deployment Project*

Grantee: Woodlands Development Group

Award Amount: \$2,500,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$2,500,000 to the Woodlands Development Group in Elkins, West Virginia, for the *Woodlands Route 33 Middle/Last Mile Fiber Deployment* project. Partnering with Generation WV and the leadership teams of Randolph and Tucker counties, this project will deploy 58 miles of fiber network to 65 businesses and 480 households. This project will receive additional funding from other federal sources and will help support a variety of economic initiatives in the region, including the Virgin Hyperloop Certification Center and the Mon Forest Towns tourism initiative.

Project Title: *The Market Fail; Power Skills and the Social Enterprise Mindset: The WV Jobs Network*

Grantee: High Rocks Education Corporation

Award Amount: \$1,499,924

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,499,924 to High Rocks Education Corporation in Hillsboro, West Virginia, for *The Market Fail; Power Skills and the Social Enterprise Mindset: The WV Jobs Network*. The project will create the West Virginia Jobs Network to create pathways for employers and job seekers to fill existing jobs with support to align the right candidates to the right opportunities. Primary focus will be on southern West Virginia's 54 counties and includes employers and students across much of the state. Activities will offer training and support services, create an accredited power skill certification, and pioneer a social enterprise mindset training curriculum. The network will be led by five anchor organizations that are experts in workforce, young talent, AmeriCorps, and STEM pipelines. Partners include Coalfield Development, Generation WV, First2 Network, and Bristol Connect. The project is expected to include 200 AmeriCorps members completing service in West Virginia, 78 participants in workforce development programs, and 30 first-generation and underrepresented STEM college students.

Project Title: *Appalachia FORWARD (Freight Opportunities Reducing Waste and Revitalizing Development)*

Grantee: Coalfield Development Corporation

Award Amount: \$1,464,309

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,464,309 to Coalfield Development Corporation in Wayne, West Virginia, for the *Appalachia FORWARD (Freight Opportunities Reducing Waste and Revitalizing Development)* project. Focusing on the tri-state area of West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky, Appalachia FORWARD will expand the commercial base in recycling, reuse,

and bio-based manufacturing. Appalachia FORWARD will provide technical assistance for entrepreneurs and social enterprises in the transportation and reuse sectors; train and hire people in the sustainable deconstruction and reuse upcycling of materials from abandoned, dilapidated buildings; and conduct research, innovation, and testing of upcycling, repair, and bio-based manufacturing business models. Key partners include Rural Action, the Athens-Hocking Recycling Center, Marshall University's Appalachian Transportation Institute, West Virginia community and technical colleges, Pure Cycle (a private business using a patented recycling process to transform plastic waste feedstock), and Goodwill Industries of KYOWVA. In addition to contributions from project partners, additional funding is provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, and the Sugar Bush Foundation. The project is expected to create 50 new jobs and six new businesses and improve skills for 300 workers.

Project Title: *Downtown Appalachia: Revitalizing Recreational Economies (DARRE)*

Grantee: West Virginia Community Development Hub

Award Amount: \$1,270,482

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,270,482 to the West Virginia Community Development Hub in Charleston, West Virginia, for the *Downtown Appalachia: Revitalizing Recreational Economies (DARRE)* project. Focusing on recreational economic development surrounding the Monongahela National Forest, DARRE will help eight small towns revitalize main street properties, link building owners with commercial tenants, and help communities develop the economic, social, and financial capital required to become thriving tourist destinations. The financing partner in the project, Natural Capital Investment Fund in Charles Town, West Virginia, will make equity investments in high-impact projects with an identified need for more significant predevelopment investments. The project will tap the community revitalization experience of the West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center and the professional insights of the West Virginia University School of Design and Community Development. Major financial support of the project comes from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Generation West Virginia, the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, and the One Foundation. The project is expected to serve 106 businesses and create nine new businesses and 38 jobs.

Project Title: *Cybersecurity and Safety Workforce Development Initiative*

Grantee: Glenville State College

Award Amount: \$1,123,656

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,123,656 to Glenville State College in Glenville, West Virginia, for the *Cybersecurity and Safety Workforce Development Initiative*. This new workforce development program will annually provide training and professional certification opportunities to over 500 unemployed, underemployed, or displaced workers in a 14-county region in North Central West Virginia that suffers from economic distress and the impact of the decline in the coal economy. The training will focus on high-demand fields of cybersecurity, homeland security, policing, corrections, and similar security professions. Recent reports indicate that there are currently more than 1,000 open cybersecurity jobs in West Virginia, and the number is growing rapidly. This project will enable Glenville State, the only four-year college in West Virginia located in an economically distressed county, to build a competitive workforce, increase labor participation rates, and diversify the local economy by supporting the employment needs of a growing industry. The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation is providing additional support.

Project Title: *Launching the Mountaineer Trail Network*

Grantee: Friends of the Cheat

Award Amount: \$1,089,360

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,089,360 to the Friends of the Cheat in Kingwood, West Virginia, for the *Launching the Mountaineer Trail Network*. The project builds on a previous POWER planning grant that provided initial development of the Mountaineer Trail Network Recreation Authority (MRTNA). Activities will include the launching of the Mountaineer Trail Network; finalizing the development of MRTNA to manage the network over 15 West Virginia counties; conducting outreach to and supporting trails in the region to become part of the formal network; providing tourism-oriented business mentoring; establishing the Network's joint branding and marketing platforms; and launching the network for public use. Engaged in the project are multiple partners, including Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority, Downstream Strategies, and WVU Outdoor Economic Development Collaborative. Major financial support for the project is being provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Just Transition Fund, U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation, and Enforcement and Downstream Strategies. The project is expected to improve 15 communities and create 70 businesses and 1,237 jobs.

Project Title: *WV Center for Nurse Entrepreneurship*

Grantee: Future of Nursing West Virginia

Award Amount: \$630,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$630,000 to Future of Nursing West Virginia in Charleston, West Virginia, for the *WV Center for Nurse Entrepreneurship* project. This project will create a physical space to foster entrepreneurial activities and increase economic opportunities for nurses, especially advanced practice nurses, who are qualified to provide direct health care services, including prescriptions and telehealth. The center will help expand the pilot project training curriculum, provide regional training for nurses looking to be successful entrepreneurs, and expand the online WV Nurses in Business Directory. Staff will train, coach, mentor, and provide financial resources to 100 nurse participants who are expected to open 40 businesses over three years. Project partners include the West Virginia Small Business Development Center and the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce. The U.S. Economic Development Administration and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation are providing additional funding.

Project Title: *Health Care Workforce Gap Analysis Project*

Grantee: The Center for Rural Health Development

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to the Center for Rural Health Development in Hurricane, West Virginia, for the *Health Care Workforce Gap Analysis Project*, which will focus on the collective system for recruitment and retention of the state's healthcare workforce. This project will build on prior work from the West Virginia Office of Rural Health and other stakeholder research to perform a gap analysis that includes a number of activities: planning, stakeholder engagement and input, data review and analysis, and development of project deliverables. These activities will lead to an internal report for various stakeholders across West Virginia detailing gaps in the state's healthcare workforce; it will eventually lead to an "at-a-glance" document for marketing, fund-development, education, and outreach.

Project Title: *Trail Town Plan for the Elk River Rail Trail System*

Grantee: Braxton County Development Authority

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to the Braxton County Development Authority in Sutton, West Virginia, for the *Trail Town Plan for the Elk River Rail Trail System* project. In partnership with the Elk River Trail Foundation, Inc. (ERTF), the Braxton County Development Authority will inventory tourism infrastructure and identify community assets along the 50-plus-mile Elk River Trail system in Braxton and Clay counties. In addition to identifying potential tourism infrastructure improvements, project activities will include the development of strategies to support business development in the area and the creation of an overall plan with both community- and regional-level goals and objectives.

Project Title: *Equity in Entrepreneurship: Strategic Planning for Youth Entrepreneurship*

Grantee: West Virginia University

Award Amount: \$49,974

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$49,974 to West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia, for the *Equity in Entrepreneurship: Strategic Planning for Youth Entrepreneurship* project. Headed by the West Virginia University Extension Service in partnership with West Virginia University Chambers College of Business and Economics and the West Virginia Public Education Collaborative, the project will conduct strategic planning for the expansion of youth entrepreneurship education, specifically focusing on rural and low-income youth in West Virginia. The project's goal is to build the capacity of current and next-generation leaders and organizations to innovate, collaborate, and advance community and economic development. The project is expected to produce one plan/report, which will include mapping of available resources, identification of gaps in service, discussion of barriers to participation and strategies for increasing access, and identification of opportunities for increased collaboration.

Project Title: *RenewAll Cultural Wealth Hub: An Investment in Heritage Tourism and Entrepreneurship*

Grantee: RenewAll, Inc.

Award Amount: \$47,500

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$47,500 to RenewAll in Huntington, West Virginia, for the *RenewAll Cultural Wealth Hub: An Investment in Heritage Tourism and Entrepreneurship* project. The project will transform RenewAll's two-building complex into a flex-space "Cultural Wealth Hub" that will house a vendor space for creative entrepreneurs, a makerspace for cultural goods, a heritage museum and educational center, an indoor/outdoor performing arts and cultural events venue, an entrepreneurial training space, and the office for the RenewAll Main Street organization. RenewAll will develop a model for incubating and supporting more heritage tourism, arts, and cultural entrepreneurship in the Old Central City area. The project is expected to produce five plans/reports, serve 19 businesses, and improve six businesses.

Project Title: *Lewis County Greenways: A Feasibility Study*

Grantee: Lewis County Commission

Award Amount: \$40,680

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$40,680 to the Lewis County Commission in Weston, West Virginia, for *Lewis County Greenways: A Feasibility Study*. The study will investigate a greenway spanning Braxton, Harrison, and Lewis counties that would provide a people-oriented, non-motorized green pathway that connects historic sites, recreational assets, and business districts along a line of the three counties. The final study will engage local stakeholders and provide recommendations for trail alignment, implementation strategy,

budgeting, operations and maintenance, and construction phasing, as well as considerations for the placement of a future community recreation center.

Project Title: *State Use—Job Placement of Disability Community Expansion*

Grantee: West Virginia Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (WVARF)

Award Amount: \$40,312

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$40,312 to the West Virginia Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (WVARF) in Charleston, West Virginia, for *State Use—Job Placement of Disability Community Expansion* project. The project will conduct a statewide needs assessment and detailed economic impact study of the State Use Program, identifying state agency needs in order to expand community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) that provide workforce development, employment opportunities, and entrepreneurial support to citizens with disabilities and individuals in recovery from substance use disorder (SUD). With this planning grant, WVARF and its project partners will assist the 27 established CRPs across West Virginia, the SUD recovery community, and corporate partners in crafting the appropriate vocational training to develop a workforce that meets identified state agency needs.

Project Title: *Wayne County Phase 1 Broadband Fiber Project*

Grantee: Wayne County Commissioners

Award Amount: \$1,551,200

Announcement Date: December 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,551,200 to Wayne County, West Virginia for the *Wayne County Phase 1 Broadband Fiber project*. Through this project, Wayne County will deploy 16.8 miles of middle-mile fiber stretching from Mountwest Community College to Wayne County's 911 center. The project will establish last-mile fiber-to-the-premises service in four underserved communities in northern Wayne County: Beech Fork, Marina, Lavalette and Ardel. This project is expected to serve up to 191 businesses, 4 communities and 796 households.

POWER Special Regional Projects (1 Award)

2021 Awards

Project Title: *Appalachian Investors Alliance: Capital Access and Impact*

Grantee: Appalachian Investors Alliance (AIA)

Award Amount: \$1,496,719

Announcement Date: September 2021

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,496,719 to the Appalachian Investors Alliance (AIA) in Knoxville, Tennessee, for the *Appalachian Investors Alliance: Capital Access and Impact* project. The project will create new access to capital by creating and supporting angel and micro-venture funds in small and growing Appalachian businesses across nine Appalachian states and 90 Appalachian counties. The project will organize more capital into angel and micro-venture funds, offer technical service support to improve effectiveness of investments, and provide targeted, investor-focused entrepreneurial education and development through instruction and mentoring. This project is expected to serve 100 businesses, 40 communities, and 300 participants; create 6 new businesses and 250 jobs; retain 548 jobs; and leverage \$52.3 million in private investment over three years.